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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

TRANSCRIPT OF PRESS AND RADIO NEWS BRIEFING, MONDAY,  
OCTOBER 29, 1962, 12:37 p.m.

MR. WHITE: Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sure that you all share with me and others in the Department the feeling of utmost sadness over the death yesterday of our colleague, Denys Smith, of the London Daily Telegraph.

Denys has covered the Washington scene for many years. But, more importantly, the warmth of his friendship, his keen sense of humor, his courtesy and his ready help to any who needed it endeared him to all who came to know him.

Denys will be sorely missed but never forgotten.

Now, Mr. Scali, you can murder me because we do have the weekly round-up of current international conferences and meetings in which the United States Government is participating.

Q Good.

A That is all I have.

Q Will that include the one in New York?

[Laughter]

A I don't know whether it does or not. It should.

Q Linc, what is the State Department's reaction to Castro's demands that we pull out of Guantanamo?

A Well, the immediate goal of the United States is the elimination of the missile bases in Cuba, which were installed by the Soviet Government, and which have been operated exclusively by Soviet technicians.

Q Does this mean that the IL-28's do not fit into the--among the first things that must go?

A I don't mean to limit this in any way. I think it's quite clear that offensive weapons are included here.

Q Linc, when you say the "immediate"--

Q The question again? What was that question?

Q The question was for a reaction on Castro's demands that we pull out of Guantanamo. Is that an answer to that question?

Q The answer is the first thing is the elimination of missile bases?

A Well, our treaty rights to the naval base

at Guantanamo are clear and therefore our position there remains unchanged.

Q Linc, would you say specifically that in the light of this we will not consider at any point in the foreseeable future including Guantanamo in any negotiation that may follow the current events?

A Well, let me go background here for a minute. How many times do we have to emphasize that no deals are involved in any way, shape or form in this situation? *End Background.*

Q Do you have anything on the arms agreement situation in India?

A Well, I think what is known perhaps to all of you; namely that Prime Minister Nehru in a conversation with Ambassador Galbraith has asked for American assistance for India's defense requirements.

Ambassador Galbraith told Prime Minister Nehru that the United States is prepared to help India as much as possible.

Q Linc, was anything said about whether such aid should be in the form of grants or purchase?

A There was no discussion of details in the conversation between the Prime Minister and Ambassador Galbraith.

Q Is any arrangement made for sending a military mission either from there to here or here to there?

A John, as far as I know, those details have not been worked out. As you know, there are two Indian officials in this country now. They came initially to talk about spare parts for aircraft.

Whether they will be assigned to talk further specifics with us or not, I just don't know.

Q You still don't have the names?

A I had them the other day. I am sorry, I don't have them with me--no, I did not.

Q Linc, can you shed any light on reports out of New Delhi quoting Embassy sources there to the effect that an arms airlift is likely to begin before the end of this week?

A No, I have nothing on that.

Q Linc, back to Cuba--

A Let me just add on background, when we do have details, you can be sure that every effort will be made to expedite furnishing them, as I say, with as much help as possible.

Q Linc, would it be possible--

Q The words "as much as possible," does that mean limited, or much?

A My very good friend, I cannot tell you that. The United States has got many calls on it from countries all over the globe, and of course it's limited.

Q Linc, do you have any comment on the signal given by the Havana Government for widespread agitation in Latin America and its possible relationship with the Venezuelan sabotage?

A Well, there is no question whatsoever about its relationship. During the present Caribbean emergency situation our Embassy at Caracas has been keeping in close touch with Venezuelan authorities regarding the extraordinary security measures the Venezuelan Government is undertaking.

A detachment of Venezuelan marines has been sent to Maracaibo to reinforce guard of installations there.

Now, with respect to this specific instance, I'd like to go on background on that, but early Sunday morning; that is, October 28, four electric transformer sub-stations on Lake Maracaibo, which are part of the Creole installations there, were blown up.

These transformer sub-stations furnished power for pumping petroleum out of the wells. It will be a day or two before the extent of the damage is known.

The Venezuelan Government informed our Embassy in Caracas that broadcasts from Cuba heard in Venezuela Saturday ordered terrorist acts against United States citizens and sabotage of United States property.

If you want further evidence of the sensitive spot this touched in Havana, and if you understand Spanish, just tune in the Havana radio. It's screaming to high heaven about this.

Q Linc, do we have reason to believe that Havana radio has ordered similar terrorist activities in other Latin American countries?

A Well, I'd rather confine myself to what I know about, John.

Q Screaming to high heaven about the terrorist activities against the citizens, and sabotage of property?

A Oh, no. The halo, which hovers over the head--and the breast is beaten so with righteous indignation that any such allegation could be made that--Mr. Shakespeare had a word for it, about "protests" too much.

Q Linc, why is this background?

A What?

Q About this Venezuelan thing, why is this on background if--you seem so sure of it.

A Because it's not my Government that the

information comes from, it's the Venezuelan Government. End *Reagan*

Q I see.

Q Linc, can you give any report on the base-dismantling situation in Cuba? Your opening, or first statement said--

A Well, I think you are all aware of the details on it. Secretary General U Thant is working on this.

Q Linc, is there any evidence that construction work has stopped or that any dismantling has begun?

A I am afraid you'd have to ask Defense that.

Q Linc, is there any proposal that Mr. McCloy should proceed with Mr. U Thant to Havana to discuss the matter?

A I have no information on that, one way or the other.

Q Can you give us any information about the talk that Secretary Rusk had with the Latin Americans yesterday?

A No. Those of us who were here last night simply heard the words of Ambassador Sacassa, who spoke about complete solidarity of the American republics.

Q Is the State Department trying to form

any kind of a stand-by inspection team to advise those from the United States, who ultimately may go to Cuba, to make sure the missiles are in fact dismantled?

A No. As I say, the Secretary General is working on all these details.

Q Could you say specifically, for background or otherwise, whether this situation applies to the Argentine Government, about United States property in Buenos Aires?

A I am afraid I'd have to call on my colleagues here. I don't know--I have nothing on it.

Q That is not attributed to this Havana stimulation?

A I just have nothing on that at all.

Q Mr. White, does it mean that the Latin American Ambassadors came in last night for Mr. Sacassa to renew the solidarity of the United States?

A No, I think he was acting as their spokesman.

Q Was it for that purpose, the visit?

A No, the purpose of the visit was to bring them up to date on the latest developments.

Q Thank you very much.

Q Line, do you have anything on the

Secretary's possible movements the next day or two?

A I know of none. If by that you mean is he going to New York, I know of nothing.

Q Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:50 p.m., the meeting was concluded.]

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